GUIDE TO THE MA11 KURD FILE

[This file is concerned with the Kurds, a number of closely related Moslem tribes speaking similar dialects and inhabiting the mountainous crescent that stretches from the Euphrates in northern Syria and Turkey to Kermanshan in Iran. This area is commonly referred to as Kurdistan, which has neither political nor geographic unity, being a semi-continuous territory divided among the modern states of Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Syria and the U.S.S.R. A great many of the approximately three million Kurds in this area are urbanized, Arabized or Turkicized, and are Kurdish by descent only and not by traditional culture. The majority of Kurds are subsistence farmers, many of whom practice local transhumance. Two basic and distinctive types of social organization are found: a tribal system based on descent, and a feudal system based on class and land ownership.

There are eleven sources in the Kurd file, all of them in English. The major sources are 2: Masters, 4: Hansen, 7: Barth and 8: Leach. 2: Masters, by an ethnologist who was in the field in 1951, is a study of the Kurds of the town of Rowandux in Iraqi Kurdistan. Masters gives a general ethnographic sketch, and describes the social organization and the relation of Rowandux to the central Iraqi government. 8: Leach, by a social anthropologist who was in the field in 1938, also presents a general ethnographic sketch of the Kurds of Rowandux. Both 4: Hansen and 7: Barth are concerned with the Kurds of the area to the west of Rowandux. 4: Hansen, by an anthropologist in the field in 1957, is a general study of women's role in Kurdish life, with a great deal of ethnographic detail, complementing 1: Garnett's

much earlier study (dating from the 1880's) on the same topic. 7: Barth, by an anthropologist in the field in 1951, concentrates on an analysis of the social structure of the Kurds in this area, with the blood feud being discussed as well. 3: Barth is a short theoretical analysis of a type of marriage found in this area. 5: Edmonds and 10: Johnson and 11: Johnson are general sketches of the culture of the Iraqi Kurds. 9: Roosevelt is a history and political analysis of the short-lived Kurdish Republic of Mahabad in Iran. 6: Vinogradov is a cultural summary of the Kurds, based on material in this file, and provides a good introduction to the Kurds. This is a generally good file for comparative studies. Most of the material is specific to a definite area in northeastern Iraq, and, except for 1: Garnett, there is not a great time spread involved in the data. The file was processed between 1962 and 1974.]

101

101 IDENTIFICATION--name of the society or cultural group; alternative names bestowed by selves and others; meanings of names; location of group with reference to comparable and larger groups; names given by selves to other groups; affiliation with a culture area or subarea; period as of which the culture is described, and its relationship to other time periods; local and temporal subdivisions employed in the classification of data; specification of date and locale of field study; etc. See also:

Territorial organization 63
Location 131
Cultural distributions 171
Intracultural differences 184
Linguistic relationships 197
Ethnic stratification 563

113, 101, 221, 619, 463 Kurd MAll

[For information on the Kurd see 1: Coon, Ml Middle East, cat. 116, pp. 215-217.]

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

CHAPTER I.

KÛRDISH WOMEN: THEIR STATUS AND OCCUPATIONS.

THE Kûrds are to be found scattered all over the Eastern Highlands of Asia Minor, from the Taurus to the Caucasus, as well as in Kûrdistan proper, where the population is equally mixed. Under the name of Kûrd, however, two distinct races are included, who form as great a contrast to each other in physiognomy as in character and manner of life. The one race is nomad, warlike, and full of vivacity, the other is agricultural, pacific, and not remarkable for intelligence.[1] The features of the peasantry are much softer and less pronounced than those of the tribesmen, who have long and rather aquiline noses, prominent foreheads, keen, deep set eyes, generally black, but sometimes grey, or even blue, small mouths, and pointed chins. Their step is firm, their bearing proud and dignified, and at the first glance one sees that they are the lords of the country.

The Kûrds generally are strong, healthy, well-built people, and in spite of the inequalities of climate of the country they inhabit, live to a good old age. The children are clear-skinned, rosy-

[1] The Turkish proverb, "Stupid as a Kûrd," applies only to the peasants of this nation.

[Page 113]

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

elders having great weight, and, as I shall subsequently point out, even the women are not excluded from a share in the politics of the tribe.

Though more or less dominated by the numerous conquerors who have successively, for three thousand years, overrun those regions which are now called Kūrdistan, the Kūrds have never ceased to own a distinct nationality. Since the Ottoman conquest they have been constantly wavering between the two rival powers of Islam—the Sunnis and the Shias, as represented by the Turks and the Persians respectively, siding, according to the exigencies of the time, now with one party and now with the other. Notwithstanding their sufferings in the destructive wars of conquest waged for centuries by Turk and Persian, and the constant internal feuds fomented by both those nations in order to weaken the power of the Kūrdish warriors, they still maintain a sort of semi-independence, preserving their nationality as distinct from that of their neighbours as in earlier days, though possessing no dynasty, political constitution, ancient religion, historical traditions, or literature, to bind them together.

Three times during the present century have national aspirations incited them to throw off the Turkish yoke; but owing to the immense extent of mountainous country over which they are scattered, their successes have been but partial and nugatory. Representatives as they probably are of the ancient Chaldeans, no other race has, perhaps, so long preserved its nationality under conditions so unfavourable.

Abstract

ROWANDUZ: A KURDISH ADMINISTRATIVE
AND MERCANTILE CENTER

by William M. Masters

121
105 This study has two purposes, the first of which is an analysis and interpretation of the culture of Rowanduz, a Kurdish administrative and mercantile town of northern Iraq. In carrying out this purpose, it is necessary to make reference to wider cultural horizons in Iraq and the Middle East. On the other hand, inasmuch as detailed, localized treatments of the Kurds have not been previously attempted, this study of Rowanduz is able to contribute to the ethnology of the Middle East. The Kurds are a Muslim people [101] numbering several millions, who inhabit the mountainous [161] region where the frontiers of Iraq, Iran, Russia, Syria, [131] and Turkey meet. The second purpose of this study is the delineation of the impact of the modern state on the structure of the society of the town and the district within [114] which it lies. The materials were obtained from seven weeks' intensive investigation in the summer of 1951.

An analysis and interpretation of the culture of Rowanduz are presented in six areas of discussion: 1) [128] the administrative center, 2) the mercantile center, 3) house, dress, and diet, 4) the society, 5) the family, 6) religious life. The population of the town numbers [161] about 5000 and is basically made up of merchants,

[p. i(a)]

2: Masters E-5 (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11
Rowanduz

CHAPTER I

KURDISTAN AND ROWANDUZ

Kurdistan, "the land of the Kurds," is an area of the Middle East which cannot be defined by its environmental peculiarities or its political unity. The Kurds, a Muslim people whose numbers are estimated at several millions, occupy that mountainous region where the frontiers of Iraq, Iran, Russia, Syria, and Turkey meet, an arc of land extending approximately from Aleppo to Tabriz. This corresponds to the southern portion of the complex of mountains sometimes called the "Armenian Knot," in which the Taurus and Black Sea ranges of Turkey join before fanning out as the Elburz and Zagros formations of Iran. Politically, Kurdistan is divided between five governments, and for centuries has been a party to the frontier warfare of Iran, the Ottoman Empire, and Russia. Until recent decades the "Armenian Knot" has been the home of peoples who have resisted absorption into the larger nations of the Middle East, some by force of arms and others peacefully as relics of almost forgotten Christian and Muslim sects. Of such groups, one might mention the Armenians, historically the northern neighbors of the Kurds, the Nestorian and Chaldaean Christians, the Yezidis of Jebel Sinjar, and the Druzes of Lebanon and Syria. To the north, in the Caucasus, were the Christian

Georgians and Muslim Circassians. In addition to being 101 ●
inhabited by those noted for their tenacity, this country has been the meeting place of empires and cultural traditions, in the latest centuries those of the Arabs, Persians, and Turks. The Kurds, because of their numerical strength, emphasis on arms, and religion, fared far better in the upheavals of the first World War than some of their Christian neighbors.

By "Kurd" one has reference to an ethic unit or nation whose most distinctive characteristics are its language and costume. Coupled with these are a large number of minor peculiarities which differentiate it from other Islamic peoples. Kurdish culture as a whole, however, is an amalgam 105
in which the more recent influences of the Arab, Persian, and Turk are easily discernable and many things, such as orthodox religious practices, may be assigned definite historical origins. Despite the abundance of foreign elements, Kurdish life has its own distinctive form. 114
history of the Kurds has not been satisfactorily explored, and those few treatments which have appeared are, for the most part, disappointing, for they have been written by persons whose aims were far from academic or whose scholarship is doubtful. Without entering the controversies which 175
surround the antiquity of the nation, the Kurds seem to appear first in classical literature as the Karduchi of Xenephon and the Gordyaei of Strabo, a mountain people occupying much the same area as they do today.[1] Their 174 197

[1]Driver, 1922, pp. 491-493.

and herds. The Kurdish shepherds and herdsmen of northern Iraq cannot be said to belong to this group. Although the matter requires more exact study, they live in symbiotic relationship with certain larger groups of sedentary farmers with whom they have definite economic and social ties, these last usually tribal or, at least, a common overlordship. It seems very much as though a real division of labour were involved, certain of the group being devoted to move the flocks of the whole with the change of seasons, but the historical background of this interdependence is more complex. It is, for example, uncertain whether or not the Kurdish people as a whole were once nomadic in some restricted sense, one author holding that the word "Kurd" itself was in Medieval days but a generic term for such wanderers.[1] However the development may have taken place, there is abundant evidence that the kotchir, with their mobility and firepower (the nomad of the Middle East emphasizes weapons to a much greater extent then the agriculturist), exercised until quite recently extensive dominance over the settled folk while quite inferior to them in numbers. The Kurdish chieftains, the old powers of the land, are in many cases associated with kotchir groups, perhaps belonging directly among them, although as landowners they need not follow the migrations. It should further be remembered that a small number of herdsmen can account for

[1] Mazaheri, 1951, p. 254.

Arabs, Kurds, Turkomans, and Turks. There are Persian 563
minorities in the cities of central and southern Iraq, but they fall under the religious classification of Shi'ah and there seems to be no conflict between them and Arabs of their own persuasion. The Turks are few in number and are concentrated in the middle and upper classes. In the days before the liberation of Iraq, there was bitter enmity toward the Turks as the representatives of Ottoman rule, but this has disappeared in recent years and there is no restriction, as, indeed, there never was, on marriage be- [582]
tween members of this class and Sunnite Muslims, Arabs and Kurds, of comparable status. A survey of the lists of officials and army officers reveals the remarkable extent to which the survivors of Ottoman rule have retained their position in the government service. The Turkomans are gathered in central and northeastern Iraq, mainly about Altun Keupri and Koi Sanjaq, and have been unspectacular in national affairs, largely farmers and shepherds, a remnant of the famous Horde of the White Sheep. Again, [582]
there appears to be no restriction on marriage with Sunnite Muslims, but there is little reason for an Arab, Kurd, or Turk of the upper classes to take an illiterate, impoverished bride from among them.

The matter of Arab and Kurd is quite otherwise, for 186
in the case of the latter there is a well-armed minority 648
population, Muslims, and hence free of the susceptibilities 101
of religious attack, with a strong base in agriculture and animal husbandry. They are estimated at 400,000 persons,

and representatives of the same nation, totalling several millions, are hard by in Iran, Syria, and Turkey. There is some cause for apprehension as there have been no less than six armed Kurdish rebellions, some common to several of the four governments involved and quelled with difficulty, in the past twenty-five years. As in the case of most of the population, the royal family of Iraq is Arab and the language of government is Arabic. The spectre of Kurdish nationalism strikes terror in the hearts of government officials, and there is little love lost between Arab and Kurd. Many of the Kurds regard the Arabs as unlawful rulers, at the same time scorning them for the poverty and filth to be found in southern Iraq. "Are you an Arab?" a Kurdish man or woman often challenges a dirty child of the village, "Go wash yourself." On their part, the Arabs, particularly those of the upper classes, following the tradition of Xenephon, regard the Kurds with a mixture of fear and disgust. "Why do you waste your time with those people?" the investigator was asked by an Arab official, "they are all bandits." In spite of these things, there is no bar to intermarriage between the two groups, and any Kurd can rise to great prominence in the government service, although he is a priori under suspicion. In 1951 two of the fourteen provinces in Iraq were directed by Kurdish governors, and the command of the army unit at Rowanduz was for a time given to a Kurdish staff officer.

In addition, there is a certain amount of rivalry between persons of different provinces or cities, for

3: Barth E-5 (1951) 1954 MA11 Kurd MA11

and in the same area possibly also among some Caucasian groups.[4] However, though marriage patterns do not function to define the relations between lineages, this does not assume that marriage relations and maternal ties have indeed no relevance of a structural or specifically political nature. The present paper presents an hypothesis regarding these implications in the Kurdish lineage organization, specifically the meaning of a pattern of father's brother's daughter marriage, for the consideration of students working with similar problems in the Middle East.

Features of Kurdish culture and society have been described elsewhere,[5] but might be summarized briefly. The Kurds are a linguistic and ethnic group, nearly exclusively Moslem by religion, totalling some three million people.[6] They occupy a semi-continuous territory along the hills and mountains east and north of the Fertile Crescent, divided between the modern states of Persia, Iraq, Turkey, the U.S.S.R., and Syria. Some few groups of Kurds have remained nomadic till the present day, following their herds of sheep, goats, and large cattle into the mountains in the summer and down on the plains in the winter. The great majority are today subsistence farmers, many of whom practice a pattern of localized transhumance. The present discussion relates to the southern districts of Iraq Kurdistan, where material was collected in the field from February to August, 1951.

Two basic types of organization were found: a tribal system, based on descent, and a feudal system, based on class and land ownership. The latter is progressively becoming assimilated into the modern structure of the state of Iraq; the former, a patrilineal lineage system, survives only among the nomads and a minority of the farmers in the more isolated territories.

Kurdish tribal organization is a segmentary lineage organization of very simple type. The largest kinship unit, the *tira*, is a maximal lineage, divisible into segments according to the charter of patrilineal descent. The genealogical depth of the tira varies. For the sedentary Hamawands (location: Kirkuk Liwa, Iraq), the apical ancestor is nine generations removed from the present adult generation; for the nomadic Wurda Shetri (location: centering in Sulaimani Liwa, Iraq), twelve generations.

Several tiras may be united, though not necessarily, in a political confederacy of variable endurance, the most important in southern Kurdistan being at present

4 Louis J. Luzbetak, *Marriage and the Family in Caucasia* (Vienna, 1951).

5 V. F. Minorsky, "Kurds and Kurdistan" (in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, London, 1913); E. R. Leach, *Social and Economic Organization of the Rowanduz Kurds* (Monographs in Social Anthropology, no. 3, London, 1940); Frederik Barth, *Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan* (Universitetets Etnografiske Museum, Bulletin no. 7, Oslo, 1953).

6 *The Middle East* (Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1950).

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1963. MA11 Kurd MA11

CHAPTER I

FIELD OF INVESTIGATION

The Kurds are an Indo-European people whose tongue, which has several dialects, is related to Persian. By religion they are Sunnis of the *shafi'ite* rite of Islam. Kurdistan has never existed as a political concept, though the Kurds appear through history to have inhabited the same mountainous areas as they do to-day. To the north their country, whose backbone is the Anti-Taurus, is bounded by a line drawn through Erivan, Erzurum, Erzinjan and then in a crescent through Mar'ash towards Aleppo. To the south-west the line runs along the foot of the mountains to Nusaibin, thereafter to the Tigris and Mosul and then in a straight line to Mandali on the frontier between Iraq and Iran. To the east the limit of the Kurdish area runs in a south-easterly direction from Erivan, comprises the Maku district, part of Khoi, Urmia, Mahabad, Saqqiz and Senna to Kirmanshah. The main road from Kirmanshah to Karind, and thereafter in a straight line to Mandali, roughly forms the border between the actual Kurds and the Lakks and Lurs related to them.

Descriptions of people who can be taken as the ancestors of the Kurds of our day are found in Xenophon's *Anabasis* (400 B.C.) and given by Strabo (64 B.C.–20 A.D.). It has been maintained that the Kurds were identical with the Medes of ancient times. In regard to the various theories concerning the origin of the Kurds see Nikitine[1]. The legend concerning a mysterious descent can be found in "Sharafnameh", the history of the Kurds, written in Persian in 1596[2]. Since the Median kingdom succumbed to the Persian king, Cyrus, in 550 B.C., the area that is now Southern Kurdistan was first a part of the Achaemenid kingdom (until 331 B.C.) and was thereafter ruled by the Greek Seleucids, by the Parthians, Persian Sassanids, Arabian caliphs, Mongols and Turkomans, until the Persian Safavi dynasty and the Ottoman empire laid (1639) the boundary between them through Kurdistan. To-day this area, which is inhabited by about 5 million Kurds, is divided between Iran, Turkey and Iraq, with small overlappings in Syria and the Soviet Union[3]. Thus, in 1639, the Persian Kurds were separated from their countrymen, who remained under Turkish rule until the end of the First World War.

At the end of that conflict in 1918 the two Turkish areas, the Basra and Baghdad Vilayets, were united to the Arab State, Iraq, under British mandate, whilst the question of the national status of the third area, the Mosul Vilayet, whose northern mountains were inhabited by Kurds, was made the subject of further negotiation. Inspired by no. 12 of President Wilson's 14 points, the idea was mooted at the peace negotiations at Sèvres in 1920 of creating an autonomous Kurdish state with a prospect of complete independence[4]. This was to comprise the areas east of the Euphrates inhabited

[P. 5]

8: Leach E-S (1938) 1940 MA11 Kurd MA11
Rowanduz

563 The migrations and shiftings of the Assyrian (Christian) population consequent upon the various massacres and persecutions that have taken place since the War have had important repercussions on the economics of the area. The Assyrian groups were formerly widely distributed among the Kurdish villages, mostly in a region North West from area A.1 Despite special pleading by Wigram and others it would appear that, apart from the religious differentiation, there was formerly little ethnic or cultural difference between Assyrian and Kurd. Under present conditions the differentiation is much more marked. Persecution and the patronage of over-sympathetic European Christians has had the double effect that those Assyrians who are now left in the region are on the one hand congregated into tightly isolated colonies, and on the other are rapidly adopting a high degree of western sophistication with its accompanying technical advantages. One such Assyrian colony exists at Bates, and appears to be achieving considerable prosperity through the scientific development of tobacco cultivation. This success is likely to have consequences for neighbouring Kurdish groups.

• 101 We distinguish area B therefore by the mildness of its climate; its comparative fertility; and the looseness of the tribal organisation as now existing.

[102] C. Plains area. Geographically this area differs completely from the other two. Largely flat, completely treeless, with a minimal rainfall, and scrubbed cinder dry for four or five months of every year, it would seem to be no place for the hillsman. But the soil is one of the richest in the world. It forms part of the great "fertile crescent" so beloved of archaeological historians, and has yielded a vast annual crop of wheat and barley for literally thousands of years.
172 Historically the area formed part of the great Assyrian and Hittite empires and the number of archaeological remains is sufficient evidence of its economic and political importance in ancient times. Today the
162 population consists of two distinct cultural groups; nomadic and semi-
523 settled Arabs intrusive from the South and permanently settled Kurds with distinct Turkish and Armenian groups in the towns. According to
174 May (p. 77) the penetration of the Kurds southwards into the Erbil plain is a comparatively recent historical event. He holds that the area was formerly occupied by nomadic Arab groups who have been ousted by the recent expansion of the Dizai tribe. The evidence for this
101 view seems to me doubtful. In any case, whatever the historical facts, the techniques and economic arrangements of the plains Kurds now differ
184 so markedly from the hill groups that in most respects they must be treated as a separate culture group. Politically also they differ from the hill Kurds in that the present village chiefs (Aghas) are mostly of quite different lineage to their followers, so that the organisation tends to be feudal rather than tribal. I had supposed at first that this must be a very recent development but similar conditions are described by May writing in 1920.

1/A [See map, cat. 116, p. 71 -- Dealyst].

8: Leach E-5 (1938) 1940 MA11 Kurd MA11
Rowanduz

The Nomads. In addition to the permanent settled inhabitants of the three areas here discussed there are certain nomadic groups who move seasonally from one area to another and even out of the district altogether. These nomads are again in many respects a distinct cultural group; their economy is based exclusively on pastoralism as opposed to the pastoral-agriculturalism of the settled peoples. The largest of the nomad tribes are the Berki. They are normally resident in Persia near the southernmost end of Lake Urmia. These high altitudes cannot provide sufficient fodder for their herds throughout the year and during the late autumn the bulk of the tribe migrates down the Rowanduz river and spreads out through the foothills (Area B) and the northern fringe of the plains. They return to Persia with the melting of the snows in the late spring. I have no first hand evidence concerning these people and the second hand evidence appears to be both fabulous and contradictory. There is reason to think that their tribal organization at the present time functions more perfectly than that of the settled groups, presumably owing to less government interference. They possess definite grazing rights in certain areas, even in districts nominally under the control of settled groups' though in other areas they pay some sort of rental for the right to herd their flocks. Their migration is linked with important trade activities. They bring salt with them from Persia to Iraq, and take back wheat and barley. Wool is disposed of on the Erbil market as well as large numbers of their livestock. The duty-free import of salt is of course strictly illegal but is winked at by the authorities. It was reported in the summer of 1938 that the Persian authorities intended to compel the Berki to adopt a settled habitat. It is thus unlikely that it will ever be possible to determine the precise position of this group in the political and economic organization of the Kurdish area as a whole.

In my field work I stayed nearly all the time in villages occupied by members of the Surau and Balik tribes (see Map 2).

'The Iraq government authorities are able to carry on all negotiations with the Berki through the agency of a single paramount Agha, this despite the fact that the tribe itself scatters into small family groups throughout a very wide area; this seems to imply a high degree of tribal integration. During the summer of 1938 a law case was proceeding between the Agha paramount of the Berki and Jamil Agha of Baburika (Gerdi tribe) as to whether the former need pay any rent to the latter for the grazing rights of what appeared to be Gerdi land. Jamil Agha complained to me bitterly that the Berki seemed likely to win their case owing to their greater wealth and resources for corruption. The case however establishes the point that they might claim traditional grazing rights in land seemingly within the sphere of influence of permanently settled groups.

8: Leach E-S (1938) 1940 MA11 Kurd MA11
Rowanduz

102 Accordingly the description which follows applies primarily to Area A of the foregoing description. Prior to the opening of the road it might indeed have been possible to treat this district as a single culture area, virtually self contained. Under present conditions however economic factors and the external political authority link the three regions, A, B and C, closely together. I will attempt to make clear as I proceed the degree to which generalisations derived primarily from a study of the Balik and Dergala tribes can be regarded as generally applicable to the whole region. I will conclude this section with a rather more detailed description of the groups inhabiting Area A. Map 2.

• 101 622 The Suran group whose full tribal name is Surani Begzadeh (i.e. 'descendants of the Begs of Suran') are few in number. The group is a single unit (taifa), the paramount of which is the Agha of Dergala - Mir Hamid Amin Beg.

The Balik tribe is a very much larger group and is subdivided into three clans, usually named Mallasherifi, Shevdini and Bukri, of which Mallasherifi is much the largest. The Shevdini group centred around Bayat has a considerable degree of cohesion and accepts the Agha of Bayat - Ali Agha - as paramount. The Mallasherifi on the other hand though nominally owing allegiance to the Agha of Walash - Sheikh Mohammed Agha - appear in practice to be split into three groups centred on Walash, Bust and Gelala. The Bukri are a small group about which I know nothing. Sheikh Mohammed Agha by virtue of his position as head of the largest clan is considered by the government to be Agha paramount of all the Balik; at the present time however his authority is nominal outside the immediate sphere of influence of his own village of Walash.

794 162 439 The two villages of Khalan and Shiru i Sheikh require special mention. (See May pp. 255 and 257 where Khalan is called Dar ul Asam). The heads of these two villages, *Sheikh Alauddin and Sheikh Obaidullah, are leaders of the mystic sect known as Nakhschwandi, which has its basis in Bokhara. The villages are really hospices belonging to this order. Apart from the adherents of the religious community the population is very mixed, traders predominating. The marked prosperity of the community is not hard to understand. At least two large armed convoys of smugglers passed over the border even during the course of my three day visit. They even offered to take me with them, but discretion unfortunately prevented my acceptance.

604 * These two individuals described as 'cousins' by May are really nephew and uncle respectively although nearly the same age. It is the nephew, Alauddin, who has the greater reputation and influence.

9: Roosevelt G-8 (1946-1947) 1947 MA11 Kurd MA11
Mahabad

101 131 648 In September 1941, the British and Soviet forces invaded Iran, toppling over the structure painfully erected by Reza Shah Pahlavi. As his soldiers scattered, they sold or surrendered their arms to the tribes which still roamed the desolate mountains of Iran, holding to their organization, mores, and way of life in spite of the old Shah's efforts to subdue them. Among those thus benefiting from the Iranian collapse were the Kurdish tribes occupying the mountains along the Iraqi and Turkish borders from Maku, in the shadow of Mount Ararat in the north, to Qasr-i-Shirin, on the Kermanshah-Baghdad road in the south.

In the north, the Kurdish tribes in the mountains west of Lake Urmieh found themselves contained by the strong Soviet garrisons in Rezaieh, Shahpur, Khoi, and Maku. In the absence of effective Iranian authority, the Soviets maintained direct relations with the tribes — the Jalali in the north, the Shikak in the mountains west of Shahpur, and the Herki west of Rezaieh. The chiefs of these tribes were allowed to manage their own affairs by the Soviets, who only required that they maintain security and provide grain for the Red Army. At the southern extreme of the Kurdish area, near the Kermanshah-Baghdad road — one of the main supply links between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union — British troops kept the tribes quiet.

622 668 It was in the large area between the British and Soviet forces, in the vacuum left by the fleeing Iranians, that the Kurds were able to regain their autonomy. At first the two main centers of disturbance were Merivan and the Avroman Mountains, where Mahmud Khan of Kani-Senan established a precarious hegemony; and Baneh, where Hama Rashid Khan, long in exile in Iraq, built up a principality which included Saqqiz and Sardasht. Both of these tribal chiefs were recognized for a time by the Iranian Government as semi-official governors of their areas, but were then driven into Iraq by the reorganized Iranian Army. By the fall of 1945, all of Kurdistan south of the Saqqiz-Baneh-Sardasht line was again firmly in government hands. The vacuum was thus reduced to the small area between this line and the Soviet forces based on Rezaieh, in which there was only one town of any size — Mahabad, formerly known as Sauj Bulagh, a few miles south of Lake Urmieh.

10:Johnson G-8 (no date) 1940 MA11 Kurd MA11
Iraq

175 in the Persian plains, lost through contact
178 with the outside world. By the time recorded history begins, Kurds and Persians were already recognized as distinct
[101] peoples, the former being known as Medes.
792 Some 600 years before the birth of
771 Christ and 1200 before the spread of Islam, a Kurdish prophet, Zerdusht (Zoroaster), grew up among the mountains of the Azerbaijan district near the Caspian Sea. The gospel that he preached, in its primitive and simple form, is to a greater extent the basis of Christianity and Islam than the adherents of those world religions usually admit. The Kurd of today, however, knows nothing of this. He is nominally a Mohammedan, and has even on occasions been stirred by the call of "Jihad"—the holy war—in the name of Islam. But beneath the surface there lurk some curious remnants of Zoroastrian tradition.

[A 383 (e)]

leaders in Moslem armies, from Saladin (Salah ad Din) in the hosts that opposed the Crusaders, to the late Bekr Sidqi in the army of Iraq; but they have never drawn attention to their Kurdish origin, as the name 'Kurd' implies a shepherd, which in the East is considered a lowly occupation not worthy of great men.

Some have carved for themselves small kingdoms among the tribes of their own race. But that very martial spirit which makes the Kurd proud and independent, and forbids him to acknowledge the sovereignty of anyone outside his tribe for long, has prevented the Kurds from becoming united under any one chief and thus imprinting their name on the history of the world.

In the history of the new state of Iraq individual Kurds have already made their impression. The best-known is Shaikh

[p.390 (B)]

21: Fisher S-4 (no date) 1950 M1 Middle East M1
Kurd MA 11

PRESENT POLITICAL GROUPING

M
563

It has largely been inevitable that the present national frontiers, drawn in lands where sectarian and social divisions are strong, and where political consciousness is merely in the first stage of development, should in some instances give incomplete realisation to the political needs and aspirations of Middle Eastern peoples. Although it is probably impossible to devise frontiers which would be even moderately satisfactory in this respect, present boundaries offer a number of outstanding difficulties. Palestine is a problem on its own, but in addition three other communities—the Kurds, the Armenians, and the Assyrian Christians—find themselves without a political future, and present special problems to the national governments of the various states in which they live.

K
101
221
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The Kurds are a semi-nomadic pastoral people, living in the highlands of eastern Anatolia and the north-western Zagros. Transhumance between summer pastures on the higher mountain slopes, and winter quarters in the valleys and lowlands (sometimes involving movement between widely separated districts), has brought the Kurds into conflict with the four national governments, because their homeland is now divided among Turkey, Syria, Iran, and Iraq. It has been said of this people that they have claims to racial purity and to continuity of culture that are stronger than those of any European nation, since the Kurds have been settled in their present home since about 2400 B.C.; but the term 'culture' must be taken in a limited sense, for the Kurds are renowned as a fierce and predatory people, and their social organisation has not progressed beyond the level of tribal grouping. Their occupation of eastern Anatolia and the northern Zagros has given them command of a number of important trade-routes, from which they have derived considerable revenue by means of heavy exactions on trading caravans. The Kurds have the reputation of being pre-eminently a people that it is unsafe to trifle with, and their tendency to shoot on sight at moving objects has kept outside interference to a minimum.[1] Even the Ottoman Turks could do little to subjugate them, and they remained free from Turkish taxation and military conscription.

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The Kurds were, however, employed by the Turks as agents in persecuting Christian minorities—chiefly the Armenians. The Kurds

[1] This is the verdict of a succession of travellers in the region, from Alexander the Great and Xenophon to Marco Polo and the Peace Treaty Commission of 1919.

55: Kappers D-5 (ca. 1933) 1934 M1 Middle East M1
KURD MAN

CHAPTER V.

Persia: Kurds, Circassians, Guebers and Turkomans.

The name Persia only indicates a geographical territory. If, and in how far, it is possible to disentangle the anthropology of its inhabitants will be discussed below.

For this purpose a study of the first-mentioned races may precede. According to SPEISER[1]) the Kurds are the descendants of the ancient Guti or Qurti. At the present time most of the Kurds live in Kurdistan, a territory belonging partly to Persia, partly to Turkey, lying approximately between 35° and 40° N. lat., including the Ararat slopes and extending west to the Antitaurus in Central Turkey, and east to Hamadan in Persia (i.e. approximately between 37° and 47° E. long.). Besides, a large Kurdish colony, originating from S.E. Turkey (the Kommagene, Diarbekr and Mardin) has settled in Damascus. It is this colony that I examined with Mr. MIRZO, a student of the American University of Beirut and a Kurd himself, to whom I wish to express my thanks for his help.

The literature concerning the Kurds is somewhat contradictory, as appears from the data concerning their cephalic index.

POLAK[2]) describes them as a Nordic race. DUHOUSSET[3]), who measured five Kurds, found them to be brachycephalic (86.2).

CHANTRE[4]) who examined 332 Kurds (272 males and 60 females) from Kurdistan and Caucasia, found an average index of 78.53 (with variations from 70.04 to 86.4) for the males. A similar male average (78.48) was found by NASSONOW[5]) with

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[1]) SPEISER. (Mesopotamian origins) supposes the Qurti or Guti to belong to the Ponto-Zagrian or Hurrian brachycephalic race. Although with 48 Kurds measured at Mosul the KRISCHNERS found the prevailing index to be 84—85, the great majority of the present Kurds are mesocephalic.

[2]) POLAK. Persien. Das Land und seine Bewohner. Brockhaus, Leipzig, 1865. p. 18.

[3]) DUHOUSSET. Etudes sur les populations de la Perse. Paris 1863. Quoted from KHANIKOFF. The original not being at my disposal, I cannot say where the Kurds measured by DUHOUSSET lived.

[4]) CHANTRE. Recherches anthrop. en Asie occident. Arch d. Musée d'hist. nat. de Lyon, Tome IV, 1895. See also CHANTRE: Aperçu sur les charactères ethniques des Ansariés et des Kurdes. Bull. Soc. d'Anthrop. de Lyon, Tome I, 1881—1882, p. 165 and CHANTRE: Rapport sur une mission scientifique dans l'Asie occidentale et spécialement dans les régions de l'Ararat et du Caucase. Arch. des missions scientifiques et littéraires, 3ème série, Tome X, 1883. In this paper (p. 40) CHANTRE emphasizes the variations in the Kurdish index, according to the people amongst whom they live. I am greatly indebted to Dr. CLAUDE GAILLARD of the Museum des Sciences Naturelles de Lyon for the loan of these valuable papers.

[5]) NASSONOW. Table of Kurdish measurements. Reports of the Anthropol. Soc. of Moscow 1890. Résumé in the Arch. f. Anthropologie, Bnd. 24, 1897, p. 646.

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MAI Iran (Northeast)
Turcoman
Kurd

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Iran (West Central)
Kurd
Sinjabi

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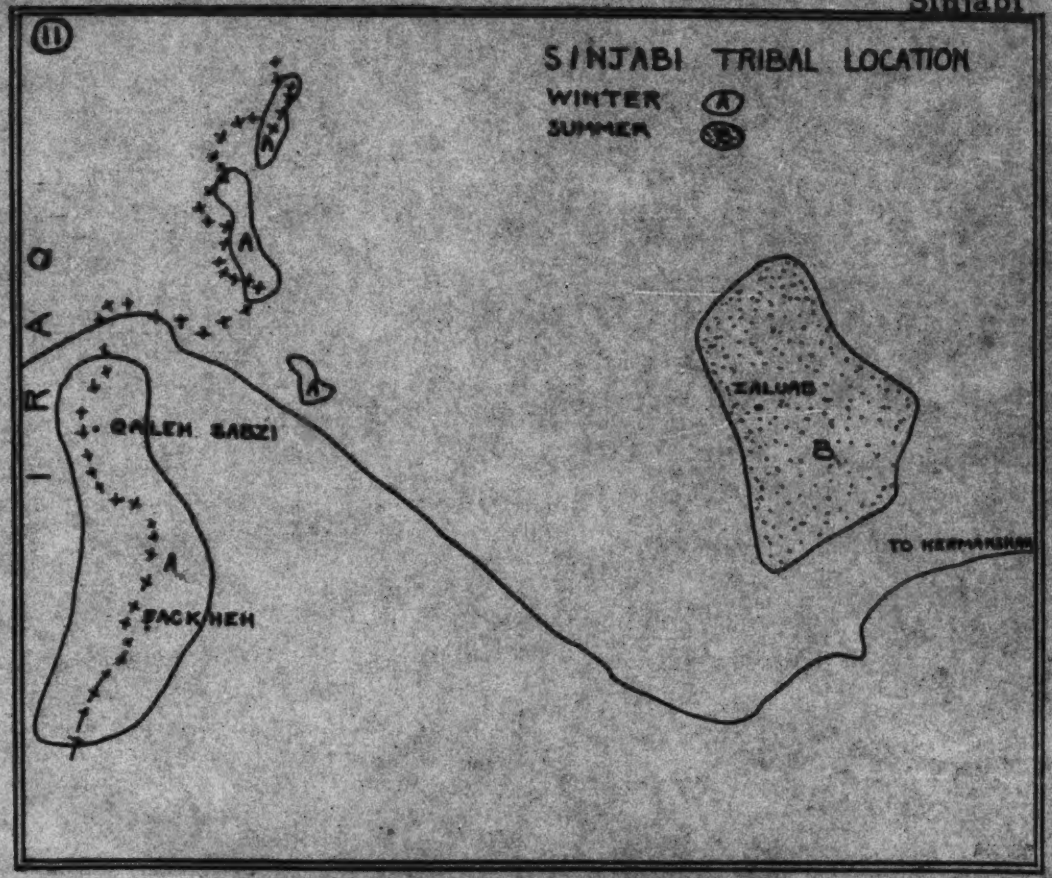

14: Ivanov E-5 (no date) 1926 MA1 Iran MA1
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now remain; there are only a few degenerate and impoverished families in the south of the province, constituting a starving nomad tribe.

The Turks are still numerous, and there are many invaders of quite recent origin, such as the Kurds, who came here in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Timuris and the Baluchis, who extended their wanderings further and further north. The latest immigrants are Mongols, the so-called Barbaris, or Hazara, who are still continuing to come in numbers. It will be better to deal with each tribe separately.

Kurds.—It is difficult to find if any Kurdish tribes were living in Khurasan before the beginning of the sixteenth century. In the surnames of many different celebrities who are natives of this province the term "Kurt" is often met with. Even a dynasty of this name ruled south of Herat in the hill districts (643–791 A.H., or 1245–1389 A.D.). Kurd and Kurt are undoubtedly the same as they are to-day; but if there had been some Kurdish people in Khurasan, they must have mixed with Persians. When under the Safawides the necessity arose of defending the northern frontier of Khurasan against the inroads of the powerful Uzbegs and Turkomans, local means were not sufficient, and the Shahs tried to institute a measure similar to that of the Cossacks in Russia, *i.e.* they settled some warlike and virile people in the threatened area. Therefore some tribes of Kurds from Kurdistan proper were transferred as early as the middle of the sixteenth century. In the beginning of the seventeenth century a new party had arrived; some of these tribes still live there, like the Kaiwanlu, the Shadillu, etc. Some more of them arrived later on in the eighteenth century, under Nadir (like the 'Amarlu). At present there is no connection with the West, and the Khurasani Kurds are gradually undergoing "Turkomanization."

With regard to the racial and tribal names, it may be observed that they are utterly unreliable for the purpose of establishing any conclusions to ethnical connections. The tribe is usually called after the surname of the chief or of the place of settlement, and very soon the whole of the tribe, to which several sub-divisions belong, becomes named after the section which was most prominent and important among them. In practice there is nothing more difficult than obtaining exact information of the name of a tribe with its sub-divisions. In Khurasan the difficulty is still greater because there are no distinct sub-dialects, and the idiom of the Kurds appears practically uniform. Many sub-sections are closely connected with the Turks, and experience real difficulty in deciding whether they are of Kurdish or Turkish nationality.

These continual changes of names make it difficult to draw up a systematic table of sub-division. Of the four tribes which are traditionally regarded as the original, namely 'Amarlu, Za'faranlu, Shadillu and Kaiwanlu, the first and last appear to-day as small tribes, while the other two are mostly Turkish-speaking and have ceased to be regarded as Kurds. The following list gives an approximate idea as to the present principal

14g Ivanov E-5 (no date) 1926 MAI Iran MAI
Kurd MAII

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The following list gives an approximate idea as to the present principle sub-divisions of the Kurdish-speaking tribes; they are mentioned in order from north to south, and according to the area which they inhabit:

1. Melanlu, in Qushkhaneh, the northern part of the districts of Isfarain, Juwain, and the extreme north of Nishapur.
2. Bajgiranlu, a small sub-tribe, living near Bajgiran.
3. Aghazlu, near Aghach and along the frontier.
4. Hiwalanlu, near Quchan, and in Darreh Gaz.
5. Qasmanlu, near Nawukh, Dizawun, etc.
6. Shadillu, in Bujnurd, etc., mostly speaking Turkish only.
7. Za'faranlu, in Shirwan, have now lost their former importance; very few speak Kurdish.
8. Kuranlu, north of Quchan.*
9. Mashkanlu, near Mashkan, in the district of Quchan.
10. Burji, *ibid.*, near Radqan.
11. Kaiwanlu, *ibid.*, in Juwain and in the northern parts of the Nishapur district.
12. Mazhdakanlu, in northern part of Nishapur and the Quchan districts.

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All these tribes represent forms of transition between pure nomads and the ordinary peasant. Many of them are half-nomads, *i.e.* they cultivate fields in the summer and are nomads in the winter, when they shift to some warmer district. It is specific that the transition from the nomadic to the settled life is very gradual, and that it is going on in every tribe.

Some other tribes consist chiefly of nomads, such as the following:

13. Rashanlu, in Khakistar, Lain, near Kaakhka.
14. Briwanlu, near Kaakhka, and in the summer in Kelat.
15. Hafshalanlu, Darreh Gaz in the winter and Quchan valley in the summer.
16. Badiwanlu, in the same places.
17. Jafkanlu, in the winter at Chamakalur and in the summer at Kuh-i-Daulat.†
18. Karamanlu, in the northern parts of the Nishapur districts.
19. Waranlu, a small tribe in the same place.
20. Tupkanlu, in the district of Juwain, partly in Nishapur; in the winter they migrate to the Dasht-i-Taqi.‡
21. 'Amarlu, north-west from Nishapur, in and around the village of Marushk (also called Marush).

* Their name resembles the Gurans of Kurdistan proper, and the connection is quite probable.

† These may be connected with a western Kurdish tribe of Jafs, who are very numerous along the Mesopotamian frontier.

‡ Their migrations extend over a very long distance, taking weeks for a journey with their live-stock. It is remarkable that their passage is never accompanied with any accident or robbery.

4: Wilson G-3 (no date) 1937 MH1 Iraq MH1
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B 619 558 178 461 a severe slump in the camel market. Slowly and very reluctantly the bedouin are turning to cultivation and feel themselves immeasurably lowered in the process. Strangely enough, they are also to be found in greasy overalls, working on the rigs of the Mosul Oil Companies. In this work they do not lose caste as they do if they become cultivators.

B 6a3 Shaikh Ajil al Yawar is the paramount Shaikh of the 'Iraqi Shammar. He is an outstanding personality possessing a fine presence and a wonderful charm of manner. With singular astuteness he has managed to control his tribesmen, keep on the right side of successive governments and at the same time amass a considerable fortune for himself. During recent years his figure has perhaps suffered somewhat from the use of motor-cars instead of riding a fiery Arab steed or liver-shaking "dhillool" (trotting camel).

Turkomans

I 173 162 Leaving the Arabs, we come to the Turkomans. They are the remnants of ancient immigration and are to be found in Tel Affar town between Mosul and Sinjar and in a string of villages across to Altun Keupri and Kirkuk. Arbil is also largely a Turkoman town. The village of Nainawa, the ancient Nineveh, just across the Tigris from Mosul, is Turkoman. In a mosque built on unexcavated Assyrian remains it contains the reputed tomb of the prophet Jonah. The mosque is also said to contain a portion of the vertebræ of the whale!

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Kurds

K 101 149 619 Next we come to the Kurds, who form by far the majority of the population of the mountain areas and who are also to be found in a large number of villages well south of the mountains. The Kurds are Aryan in origin and Sunni Muslims by religion. The mountain Kurds and in fact all the mountaineers of Kurdistan bear a close resemblance to the Scottish clans of two hundred years ago. They are still organ-

K 6a3 657 644 276 619 ized on a tribal or clan basis, though the increase in government control and influence is naturally tending to destroy this organization and undermine the power of the chiefs, or Aghas as they are called. Aghas may, however, still be seen proceeding to town or market with a "tail" of armed henchmen and even a pipebearer. The Kurdish pipebearer is, however, concerned with the Agha's tobacco pipe and

ooo not with music. Kurdish music is nevertheless played on a pipe